

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
TO: Exec Registry		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
REMARKS: <i>both Doc numbers are in the system</i> <i>DDI-00069-87</i> <i>DDI-00069/1-87</i>		
FROM: DD/SWR		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION



Central Intelligence Agency  
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

9 JAN 1987

NOTE TO: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

During [redacted] tenure as Chairman of STIC there was a renewed interest in pressing the rate of progress in our ability to process open source S&T data. The attached memo provides his view of the current status. Obviously he is not convinced that much has been accomplished since 1983.

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[redacted]

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Richard J. Kerr  
Deputy Director for Intelligence

*I recommend that  
you let Bob set up  
a session with  
you on this subject.  
Dick*

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DDI-00069/1-87

8 JAN 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM:   
Deputy Director of Scientific and Weapons Research

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SUBJECT: Open Source Processing

1. Action: That you approve the recommendations contained in Paragraph 12. (U)

2. Background: In the fall of 1983, at Mr. Casey's request, I briefed the NFIC principals on the health of the Community's S&T analytical effort with particular emphasis on the prevention of technological surprise. During this presentation I stated my strong feeling that the greatest single action we could undertake to strengthen S&T analysis was to overhaul and upgrade the collection and processing of open source material. As a result, the DCI directed that a study be undertaken to investigate open source processing and to recommend specific actions. One year later I supported a presentation by  Chairman of STAP, where we discussed preliminary findings and recommendations. Two years have now passed and I am sad to report that from my perspective little has been accomplished. The long awaited report prepared for the Executive Steering Group (ESG) for the Exploitation of Overt Information has been recently published. I understand that the report was discussed briefly at the recent off-site conference. I personally believe that this report falls far short of being the kind of action-oriented document that is needed to produce changes in the existing system. On the positive side, the ESG report contains useful statements on broad objectives. The most important of these are:

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- use of modern technology for timely translation and dissemination of open source material;
- enhancement of services of common concern, including analyst training in the use of open source services;
- expanded availability and use of commercial services;
- improved mechanisms for community exchange.

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3. It does not, unfortunately, offer an analysis of why these goals are not currently being met and therefore it does not offer a reasonable blueprint for action. Instead it suggests a host of modest incremental improvements that will do more to perpetuate the status quo than to overhaul it. In hindsight the disappointing results are not very surprising.

--The major support for these deliberations was provided by the various line organizations currently responsible for daily operations of the existing system. Major reforms cannot be expected from a group so constituted, particularly when the reforms might require these organizations to give up some of their bureaucratic prerogatives.

*You ask the  
US Army to  
reform itself &  
you get ZIP*

--The Chairman of the Executive Steering Group seemed to be more concerned with establishing political consensus than with an in-depth analysis of the problems and subsequent development of a plan to attack them.

--The report deals almost exclusively with translation and dissemination. It does not address the equally important problem of storage and manipulation of the huge volume of open source material now available and the large increase which is potentially available. (S)

*Key*

4. My Assessment of the Problem: In my view the fundamental problem in open source analysis is that, as a source of intelligence, it is not competitive with other forms of data such as HUMINT, SIGINT and Imagery. It does not have the mystique of HUMINT nor the high tech flavor of SIGINT. As a result, regardless of its intrinsic value as an intelligence source, it has never captured the attention of the community resource managers. Further it has been historically laborious to process and analyze. (S)

5. The ESG report does not recognize this, or at least does not express it well. Furthermore the ESG report tends to make the issue more diffuse by suggesting a geographical and topical broadening of the issue of open source processing. While this may be a worthwhile expansion at some later date, it does not contribute to the solution of task for which the ESG was originally constituted, i.e., improvement of S&T analysis. (S)

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SUBJECT: Open Source Processing

6. I believe the clearest statements of the problems for open source processing are contained in the comments from the 29-30 May meeting of the DCI's Science and Technology Advisory Panel (STAP). Their comments contained in the report to the DCI are, I believe, right on the mark:

"The Open Source Action Group's report describes some gratifying substantive progress and contains much declaratory interest in coordination. The most important elements of the proposed effort involve: the principle of equality of access; the use of modern technology for dissemination; and the enhancement and coordination of services of common concern.

The Panel has some concerns about the implementation of these clearly stated objectives. Much of the technology that is now used smacks of the 19th century cottage industry. Funding [redacted] over the next half decade will be needed, but the consumer demand for open source material is so diffused that there may be insufficient pressure at any point to get the allocation. Only very high level appreciation of the value of open source information can provide a remedy. The Panel also believes that implementation problems are at least as much organizational as budgetary, and that implementation efforts would be better served by assigning responsibility to a line entity to 'put someone in charge.' The Panel understands the difficulties attached to such a step (austere funding, organizational resistance, and so forth), but is persuaded that this is a much better approach than assigning responsibility to a staff element or committee." (S)

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7. What Should Be Done: The STAP recommendation that there be someone in charge and that this someone have line rather than staff responsibility is in my view absolutely crucial. The idea that tough resource allocation decisions can be somehow resolved within a committee framework is doomed to failure and will only perpetuate the

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SUBJECT: Open Source Processing

existing deficiencies at an ever increasing cost. A line organization with adequate funding has got to be formed to sort out and implement many of the useful recommendations of the ESG report. (S)

8. But more importantly this line organization has got to solve problems and create new capabilities which do not appear or are given insufficient attention in the ESG report. One of these is the issue of technology and systems development for open source processing. The STAP comment states, I believe correctly, that the technology smacks of 19th century cottage industry. Although, the ESG report identifies several areas which need R&D attention, the recommendations are particularly feeble on this account, amounting only to providing more communication and feedback from CIA/ORD on existing programs. (S)

9. Technology is available to solve many of these problems now. For example: [redacted] system, now in advanced development, can provide nearly real time, on line access, to over a million pages of S&T material. We have incorporated an optical character reader into the system, and we are therefore able to convert these large volumes of data into electronic form at a decreasing cost. This technology can also be investigated for its application to translation problems. The existence of such a system takes a giant step toward solving the storage and retrieval problem. Software for this and similar systems can be made to be rapidly transferable to new hardware. Thus, arguments that we need to await a new round of technologies are no longer valid.

[redacted]

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10. Some Specific Steps: I believe that we need to create an organization from existing Agency and Community entities to centrally direct the collection and processing of S&T data. Such a Center would function much like other Community Centers such as NPIC, and would have line responsibility to collect, translate, process and disseminate open source information to the S&T analytical centers. (The Soviet All-Union Institute for Scientific and Technical Information VINITI is a useful model as well). (S)

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11. This National Center does not necessarily imply a physical relocation of Community elements. Its formation could be achieved with a small cadre of professionals drawn from existing Community resources with an initial budget [redacted] It would, however, require additional actions. Specifically:

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--A clear and affirmative statement of national goals and priorities.

--A core of activist, entrepreneurial professional employees with line production responsibility, but freed to the extent possible of bureaucratic hindrances. (I believe a model of this is the approach followed by IBM in the creation of their personal computer line.)

--Most importantly budgetary authority for open source translation, processing and dissemination. This would include a significant amount budgeted for research and development. (S)

12. Recommendation: That you permit me to schedule a meeting with you and the interested parties to discuss these ideas. I would also suggest that Julian Nall, [redacted] and of course, [redacted] be included. [redacted] would also be a valuable addition if his schedule permits. (U)

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*How about  
Someone from  
DIA? Useful?*

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**APPROVED:**

[redacted]

Acting Director of Central Intelligence

13 JAN 1987

Date

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**SUBJECT: Open Source Processing**

**Distribution:**

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**OSWR/DD/SWR:ss**  (6 Jan 87)

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13 January 1987

NOTE FOR: ADCI

SUBJECT: Open Source Processing

Bob:

No one -- [ ] Julian Nall, or [ ] like [ ]  
report on exploitation of open source S&T data. As you recall, [ ]  
briefly referred to it at the offsite conference. [ ] would like  
to meet with you to press his more radical solution. I am told that  
this issue will not come up at Thursday's STAP meeting unless you wish  
to raise it. But if you decide [ ] ideas worth pursuing, you might  
want to put it on the next STAP agenda and it might be worth raising at  
the weekly ICS meeting. But first, do you want to schedule a meeting  
with [ ]

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P.S. We will have a package for you on Thursday's STAP meeting some  
time tomorrow. The agenda will include mobile missiles, low  
observables, high tech for low intensity conflict.

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